

## REMARKS

The Office Action of September 7, 2005, has been received and its contents carefully noted.

The present Amendment replaces the original claims with new claims 18-28. Claim 18 is independent, and the rest are dependent.

The Office Action rejected the original independent claims for anticipation by U.S. patent 6,671,737 to Snowden et al. This reference will hereafter be called simply "Snowdon." For the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by new independent claim 18 is patentable over this reference.

Snowdon's Figure 1 shows a system that includes first nodes 12 that are associated with devices 10 such as printers or the like, and second nodes 20 such as wearable computers or PDAs. The system may also include a third node or hive 50. A passage pointed out in the Office Action (column 11, lines 53-63) states that the second nodes can create, store, and exchange messages with the first nodes and other second nodes, and with the hive. Another passage noted in the Office Action (at column 11, line 65 to column 12, line 8) states that the hive (if present) saves the current state of all second nodes, all first nodes, and all pieces of "pollen." "Pollen," it turns out, is centrally stored information or messages (see the paragraph bridging columns 4 and 5).

Claim 18 recites a "collecting apparatus" that collects node information from a plurality of nodes. These nodes include a first node that generates first node information about the first node. The nodes also include a second node that serves as a backup node for storing the first node information. Claim 18 concludes with a "wherein" clause which provides that, if the collecting apparatus "judges that said first node information cannot be

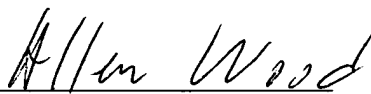
collected from said first node, collects said first node information from said second node...". Despite Snowdon's storage of "pollen" and his "hive" and his storage of the current state of second nodes, it is respectfully submitted that the reference neither discloses nor suggests storing node information about a first node in a second node, and collecting the node information about the first node from the second node if it cannot be obtained from the first node.

The remaining claims depend from claim 18 and recite additional limitations to further define the invention, so they are patentable alone with claim 18 and need not be further discussed.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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